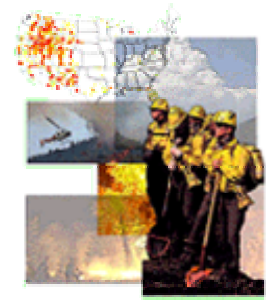


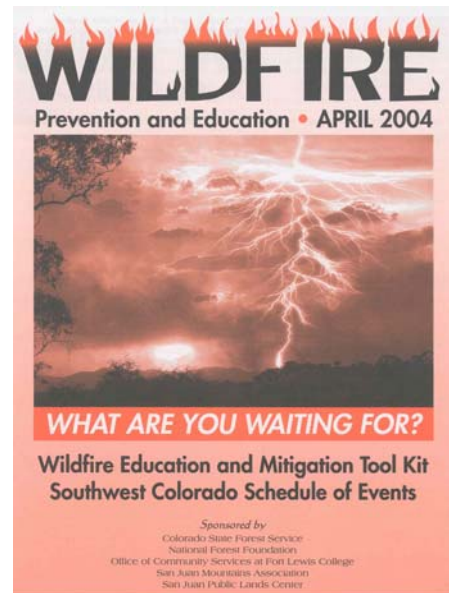
NATIONAL FIRE PLAN

Southwest Colorado Hosts Wildfire Prevention and Education Month



"What Are You Waiting For?" is the theme for the 2nd annual Wildfire Prevention and Education Month in southwest Colorado during April. Local, state, federal, and non-profit partners have joined together to showcase how the National Fire Plan is being implemented, with a particular emphasis on tools for the homeowner. Activities and workshops have been designed to make people aware of wildfire hazards and mitigation efforts on both public and private land.

The Southwest Colorado FireWise Council will host a half-day symposium for homeowners that will focus on insurance and legal issues, grant opportunities, evacuation plans, and more. Another workshop will offer considerations regarding the emergency evacuation of livestock and pets during a wildfire. Also on the agenda are tours to demonstration sites showing hazardous-fuels treatments on both public and private land; fire department open houses; and workshops on beetle infestations, forest health, and water-wise irrigation.



A new video, produced by Durango Community Access Television and the Office of Community Services at Fort Lewis College, will premiere mid-month. Titled "*First Line of Defense: Homeowners Stand Up to Wildfire*," the 30-minute documentary shows how one homeowner went about choosing a mitigation contractor to reduce the wildfire hazard on her property. The video also includes interviews with residents who lost their home in the wildfires of 2002, saved a home, or hope to save a home.

Dr. Andrew Gulliford from the Center for Southwest Studies at Fort Lewis College will present a slide show about the monuments and memorials that the Glenwood Springs community dedicated to the fourteen firefighters killed on Storm King Mountain. His lecture will be followed by an interactive question-and-answer period with wildland firefighters.

The full agenda of events can be viewed on the Web at www.sjma.org or www.southwestcoloradofires.org. For more information: Allen Farnsworth, Mitigation Specialist, 970-385-1207 or Pam Wilson, Fire Information Officer, 970-385-1230.